



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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MEDIA FACT SHEET

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Census provides an updated picture of the average Australian

- According to the 2006 Census, the average Australian was 37 (median age), although the average male was slightly younger (36) than the average female (37). Females outnumbered males – for every 100 females there were 97 males. These differences in ages and numbers occur mainly because women generally live longer than men.
- The average Australian woman had given birth to 2 children (average number of children ever born, 1.7) so far in her life. However, older women (aged 65 years or older) had given birth to an average of 3 children (2.8). Women who had only recently given birth to their first child (that is, their first child ever born was less than 1 year of age and was counted with them at home) had a median age of 29.
- In 2006, our average Australian was most likely to be in a couple family with children (46% of all people live in this family type, with the remainder spread across a range of family and household types), and this family would have had a total of 4 people present (median family size). While this might seem unsurprising, given that most women had 2 children, in some cases these children were no longer living at home and there were other related people living in the household (e.g. an elderly parent). For one-parent families, the median household size was 3 people and they were mostly headed by a mother (83% of one-parent families).
- For all Australians aged 15 years and over, the 2006 Census recorded a median weekly gross personal income of \$400–\$599. Men had a higher median income (\$600–\$799), while the median income of women was lower (\$250–\$399). To some extent, this difference between the sexes was brought about because older people (those 65 years of age and over) generally had lower incomes (a median of \$250–\$399), and there were relatively large numbers of women in these older age groups. That said, women aged 15–64 years of age also had a median income that was lower than for men in the same age group (\$400–\$599 and \$600–\$799 respectively), reflecting, to some degree, lower pay levels and a higher incidence of part-time work for women.
- While data on employment will be available in the second stage release of 2006 Census data, scheduled for later in 2007, some information on unpaid domestic work is available in this first release. Reflecting the persistence of traditional gender roles in 2006 Australian society, the average Australian woman (aged 15 years and over) spent more of her time doing domestic work (a median of 5–14 hours) than an average man (less than 5 hours, but more than none). Perhaps because of higher levels of participation in the labour force, men of traditional working age (aged 15–64 years) were the main contributors to this difference – the median hours for men aged 65 years and over was the same as for women (5–14 hours).

NB: The figures in this fact sheet exclude overseas visitors. Where an answer to a question has not been provided (i.e.

not stated) these occurrences form a separate category in the data and therefore some percentages do not total to 100%.

Source: ABS 2006 Census.

Table 1. 2006 Census: Selected persons and family characteristics, States and Territories

	Aust.	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT
Sex ratio (males per 100 females)	97	97	96	98	97	99	96	106	97
Median age - All (years)	37	37	37	36	39	36	39	31	34
Male (years)	36	36	36	35	38	35	38	31	33
Female (years)	37	37	37	36	40	37	40	30	35
No. of children ever born - All women age 15 years and over (live births)	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.5
65+ years of age (live births)	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.3	2.8
Median age of first time mother (years)(a)	29	29	30	28	29	29	27	28	30
% Persons in couple family with children (Persons)	46.2	47.2	47.9	44.4	43.5	45.3	42.9	43.1	46.8
Median Gross Personal Income per week - All persons aged 15 years and over	\$400-599	\$400-599	\$400-599	\$400-599	\$400-599	\$400-599(b)	\$250-399	\$400-599	\$600-799
Males aged 15 years and over	\$600-799	\$600-799	\$600-799	\$600-799	\$400-599	\$600-799	\$400-599	\$600-799	\$800-999
Females aged 15 years and over	\$250-399	\$250-399	\$250-399	\$250-399	\$250-399	\$250-399	\$250-399	\$400-599	\$400-599

(a) Median age of first time mothers, those at home with their children on Census night.

(b) The lower median for Tasmania is likely to have been influenced by the higher proportion of older age people in the population.

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